

REMARKS

The comments of the applicant below are each preceded by related comments of the examiner (in small, bold type).

5. Claims 1-21, 23, 24, 26-31, and 33-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Graef et al. (US 4,664,369, previously cited, hereinafter "Graef").

Re claims 1-4, 8-12, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 30, 31, and 33-38, Graef teaches a thickness indicator apparatus used in Automated Teller Machine (ATM) (see abstract; col. 2, lines 27+) for detecting double bills when the bills are retrieved from the stack (col. I, lines 34+; col. 3, lines 58+; col. 6, lines 4+). The thickness detector is comprised of two elongated fingers 50 (or free ends) attached to a wishbone 45 (col. 4, lines 16+; see figure 3). When bills move between the plate 42 and the elongated fingers 50, the elongated fingers are displaced/pushed by the thickness of the bill (col. 4, line 51 — col. 5, line 37)

...

As shown in figures 12-14, the bills are positioned under the inductive element in ideal manner (figure 12) and other situation (figure 14) wherein the bill is skewed, and only the bill is under one part of the inductive element. In case of figure 14, the inductive element is uniformly separated/displaced.

Graef does not show and would not have made obvious that the two inductively coupled elements "maintain a uniform separation" as recited in independent claim 1.

It is not clear which structures in Graef the examiner considers to correspond to the inductively coupled elements recited in claim 1. Yet these elements could not be Graef's proximity sensor and metallic target, because the separation between his sensor and the target varies according to the thickness of a bill passing under the fingers of the wishbone (col. 5, line 38 to col. 6, line 21). Nor are other pairs of elements shown in Graef's figures 12 through 14 inductively coupled. The wishbone cited by the examiner could not be rigidly coupled because the "wishbone 45 is preferably made from a rigid plastic material," (col. 4, lines 26-27, emphasis added).

All of the dependent claims are patentable for at least similar reasons as those for the claims on which they depend are patentable.

Canceled claims, if any, have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Any circumstance in which the applicant has (a) addressed certain comments of the examiner does not mean that the applicant concedes other comments of the examiner, (b) made arguments for the patentability of some claims does not mean that there are not other good

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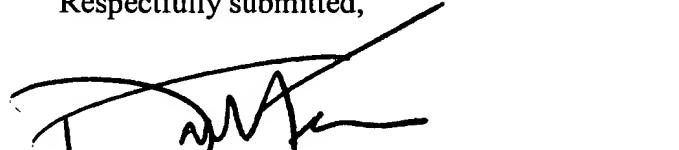
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reasons for patentability of those claims and other claims, or (c) amended or canceled a claim does not mean that the applicant concedes any of the examiner's positions with respect to that claim or other claims.

No fee is believed to be due. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, reference 13543-003001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 10/14/01



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